

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 NIC-01 PM-03

H-01 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

IO-10 OMB-01 EUR-12 SAB-01 /085 W

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R 041352Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2953

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 0691

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, PN, CU

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: PANAMA-CUBA AIR AGREEMENT SIGNED

REF: PANAMA 0613 (NOTAL)

1. AN AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT BETWEEN PANAMA AND CUBA WAS SIGNED HERE JAN 31 BY ING. JUAN ABAD, PANAMANIAN DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AERONAUTICS (DAC), AND AGUSTIN VENERO D., DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CUBAN INSTITUTE OF CIVIL AERONAUTICS (IACC) AND DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CUBANA AIRLINES. DAC ANNOUNCED THAT A MAXIMUM OF FIVE WEEKLY FLIGHTS BETWEEN PANAMA AND CUGA WOULD BE PERMITTED UNDER THE AGREEMENT AND THAT BOTH AIR PANAMA AND COPA HAD APPLIED TO OFFER THIS SERVICE. OTHER MEMBERS OF CUBAN TECHNICAL DELEGATION, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, WERE DR. ANGEL ARANGO R., CHIEF

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OF DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL AERONAUTICAL POLICY OF IACC; ELIO MORA

D.,
COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR OF CUBANA AIRLINES; AND PEDRO GONZALEZ PINEIRO,
COUNSELOR OF CUBAN EMBASSY IN PANAMA.

2. ACCORDING TO DAC SOURCES, AGREEMENT IS VALID ONLY FOR THREE YEARS,
RENEWABLE BY EXCHANGE OF NOTES SIX MONTHS PRIOR TO ITS EXPIRATION.
INITIAL PANAMANINA OFFER WAS FOR AGREEMENT OF ONLY ONE YEAR AND OF
ADMINISTRATIVE NATURE RATHER THAN MORE NORMAL AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT.

CUBA REPORTEDLY SOUGHT FIFTH FREEDOM RIGHTS FROM PANAMA TO LIMA, WITH-

OUT SUCCESS. CUBANA IS EXPECTED TO INAUGURATE SERVICE BETWEEN TWO
CAPITALS IN NEAR FUTURE, BEGINNING WITH TWO OR THREE ROUND TRIP FLIGHTS

WEEKLY AND USING ILYUSHIN 62 AIRCRAFT. APPARENTLY NO DECISION HAS YET
BEEN MADE REGARDING WHICH PANAMANIAN AIRLINE WILL BEGIN SERVICE
ON ROUTE OR WHEN.

3. COMMENT: AIR PANAMA IS NOT THOUGHT TO CONSIDER PANAM-HAVANA ROUTE
VERY SIGNIFICANT ECONOMICALLY AND MAY ALSO BE FURTHER DETERRED FROM
INSTITUTING SERVICE BY FEAR OF ACTS OF RETALIATION BY CUBAN EXILES IN
MIAMI. IT MAY HAVE APPLIED FOR ROUTE SIMPLY TO BLOCK COPA, OR IT MIGHT

BE CONSIDERING HAVANA AS A STOP ON CONTEMPLATED FLIGHTS TO MONTREAL.
AGREEMENT APPEARS TO OFFER COPA A GOOD OPPORTUNITY FOR EXPANSION OF ITS

ROUTES. RECENT VISIT OF COPA GENERAL MANAGER CARRIZO TO ISRAEL AND
CURRENT JET TRAINING BEING UNDERTAKEN BY TWO COPA PILOTS IN US ARE
THOUGHT TO BE CONNECTED WITH REPORTED PURCHASE BY GOP OF WESTWIND
EXECUTIVE JET FOR USE OF GENERAL TORRIJOS, AN OFF-AND-ON DEAL WHOSE
CURRENT STATUS IS NOT CLEAR. VISIT CONCEIVABLY COULD HAVE BEEN SHOPPING

TRIP FOR LARGER JET FOR COPA'S USE IN EXPANDED CARIBBEAN SERVICE.
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